

But this Congress has continually provided these supplemental funds the administration has requested to wage the war, and has even increased the defense budget by 19 percent since 2001.

So I ask, how can it be that the Army is closing or curtailing the family support programs and laying off employees? The answer is clear. The administration is not requesting sufficient funds to provide for the national defense beyond the war in Iraq. This Congress has already provided \$166 billion to the Army in 2006. That is \$2 billion more than the administration requested.

Obviously it is not enough. Because I am hearing of reports in the media about bases like Fort Sam Houston where the utility bills have not been paid since March. The Army knows it has a problem. They even requested more money, but the President's Office of Management and Budget cut \$4.9 billion from the Army's request for the 2006 war supplemental before it was presented to Congress.

So now the Army is trying to pinch pennies by closing libraries, reducing trash pickup, closing dining facilities, and reducing support for vital training activities. This is a move that is certain to damage morale and sends the wrong message to our troops. This is not the way to reward the courage and sacrifice of our soldiers and their families.

Several weeks ago, I spoke here on the floor about the dismal readiness posture of the Army's equipment. Readiness rates for equipment have fallen so far that I fear that they will now present a strategic risk to our ability to respond to contingencies beyond our current commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In addition to this problem, the Army is now laying off engineers working on some of the high priority modernization programs in order to pay bills elsewhere in the Army.

The needs of the current and future Army are being neglected. As a candidate in 1999, President Bush said that "The previous administration wanted to command great forces without supporting them, to launch today's new causes with little thought of tomorrow's consequences."

Unfortunately, it appears that the words now apply to his own administration. He is failing to request the funds the military needs to fight the war on terror, the war in Iraq, and also remain ready to defend the Nation if other needs arise.

This country is at war. Americans have a right to expect the administration to realistically budget for national defense. That is not happening, and every day it continues to put this country at greater risk.

□ 1645

RAILWAY SECURITY

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to address the House for 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, the Bush administration constantly crows about protecting us from terrorists, but when you get down to nuts and bolts it is clear that the administration and the Republican leadership of this Congress have no idea what they are doing. Just yesterday, terrorists killed more than 180 people by attacking the mass transit system in Mumbai, India. You had better believe that every one of the 4 million subway riders in New York took a deep breath before getting on the train this morning. New Yorkers know that, when terrorists strike, they go after high density, high profile targets. Every time you read in the newspapers that a terrorist abroad has been apprehended, you find the plans to strike at the United States are of Washington or New York, the maps in their possession or on their computers are of New York. Evidently this is yet to dawn on the Department of Homeland Security. Their ignorance is nothing short of disgusting.

We need to step up not only the distribution of funds to the right places, to the targets in this country, we need to step up rail security protections in this country. The Democratic Rail and Transportation Security Act proposes to appropriate \$400 million a year for the next 6 years for a grant program to beef up the rail and public transportation security on our mass transit systems in the country as a whole, New York and elsewhere, but the administration and the Republicans in Congress say no.

The Democrats propose to spend \$150 million over the next 3 years for advanced research and development to find more advanced solutions to the security threats faced by rail and public transportation systems. Again, the Bush administration and the Republicans in this Congress say no. We ought to be spending roughly \$26 million a year over the next 6 years to hire 200 new rail security inspectors per year. Is this really necessary? You bet. Right now there are only 100 rail security inspectors for the whole country.

We need to increase our intelligence efforts to prevent attacks, develop plans to respond to attacks, and ensure the timely restoration of our rail infrastructure should an attack occur. The Democrats have advanced plans to do this, while the Republican leadership of this Congress and this administration waste their time designating insect zoos and bean festivals as terror targets as was revealed in the front page of the New York Times today from the list of targets on the Homeland Security target list.

Is there no end to their incompetence? First they cut funding for the prime target in this country, New York, by 40 percent. Then they declare an excuse that New York contains no national landmarks or icons, and now

we learn they are designating a kangaroo conservation center as a key terrorist target. There is no excuse for short-changing this country's top targets. As the Inspector General has wisely determined, folksy appeal cannot be the chief criterion for the allocation of anti-terrorist funding.

It has been over 1 year since terrorists struck London's mass transit system, over 2 years since the rail bombings in Madrid, yet little has been done in the United States to protect our rail and mass transit systems. This administration, the leadership of this Congress must open its eyes to reality and put our resources where they are really needed before we have another catastrophe, a preventable catastrophe, on our hands. And then it will be little comfort to know that the blame lies with the administration and the Republican leadership of this Congress.

We don't want to be laying blame. We don't want to be saying it is their fault. We want to prevent it. So let us learn a little, and let us pray that the administration and the Republican leadership of this Congress has their heads examined and opened their eyes.

HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING FOR NEW YORK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York for his remarks.

I rise today to express my continuing frustration with the Department of Homeland Security and its inability or unwillingness to focus our limited resources of time, money, and attention on the real risks that we face as a Nation. Yesterday, the bombing of railways in India reminded us not only that terrorists remain committed to senseless and horrific violence, but that they remain attracted to certain types of targets.

Mr. Speaker, in 2001, terrorists attacked New York and Washington. Two years ago, terrorists attacked commuter trains in Madrid. Last year, terrorists attacked subways in the heart of London. Two days ago, rail systems in Mumbai were bombed. There have also been rail and transit attacks in Japan, South Africa, and Israel, and so far unsuccessful plans for attacks on New York's transportation system.

On the streets of Iraq, insurgents are perfecting the use of IEDs against our troops. When those terrorists look to transfer their skills to the United States, where will they look to use them? The pattern is clear, the message is deafening: High density, high profile targets are the most attractive targets for terrorists, and rail and transit systems remain dangerously vulnerable.

Like many of the Members of this House, I was pleased when Secretary Chertoff took office and stressed in his

first public speech that DHS must base its actions on threat, vulnerability, and consequence. Unfortunately, action has not measured up to that rhetoric. Last month, the Department cut by 40 percent for New York and Washington, D.C., cut funding by 40 percent, two cities that have been attacked and the two cities that remain the most likely targets for future attacks.

We are all looking for the best way to spend the limited money that has thus far been allocated to homeland security. The Department perfected the art of allocating funds the wrong way.

In addition to ignoring the plain facts about risk and vulnerability, DHS has sat on the sidelines in developing standards for safety and security. This void is being met in some areas such as New York where the Metropolitan Transit Agency has added 200 officers and 25 K-9 bomb detection units since September 11. New York City has 1,000 counterterrorism officers. The city and the MTA are working to develop and install state-of-the-art air monitoring devices in the transit system.

We knew that communications interoperability presented a problem for first responders in Oklahoma City. Those problems turned deadly on September 11. Nearly 5 years after September 11, first responders are still waiting for the administration to issue an actual interoperability plan. This abdication of responsibility has forced many cities and States to dig their own deficits deeper to put national security measures in place. That is not a plan, it is not a strategy, it is a failure of leadership that we are seeing again and again.

Mr. Speaker, our homeland security efforts are a race against the clock. We have received several wakeup calls. We don't need another study or another office or another Under Secretary; we need action. And next week I hope the House Committee on Homeland Security markup of the Department of Homeland Security authorization bill will provide us a real opportunity to strengthen our homeland security and spur DHS to act more quickly to protect the American people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

INCREASING THE MINIMUM WAGE

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of turn.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, Members of the House,

earlier today we had a motion to instruct on the vocational education conference, and the motion to instruct was about the minimum wage and about the need of 6 million people who work at the minimum wage for an increase in that minimum wage. These individuals have been stuck at \$5.15 since 1997. They are earning 1997 wages in the year 2006.

Over 80 percent of Americans from all across the country, obviously if it is 80 percent of Americans, from every walk of life, from every social economic strata, believes that these people are entitled to an increase in their wages, and they believe that out of fairness, they believe that out of a sense of fair play for these individuals. They know when they look at their own life, be they middle class or be they rich, the fact of the matter is they recognize that costs have gone up, that the cost of food has gone up, that the cost of bread has gone up, that the cost of milk has gone up, that the cost of education has gone up, that the cost of utilities has gone up, the cost of gasoline of course has soared. And these people in many ways are dependent, whether it is on public transit or whether it is on their own automobiles, it costs them more to go to work.

And so America understands this very clearly. But the critical piece to getting these people the minimum wage is to get the Republican leadership in the House of Representatives to understand the morality of this decision to provide for a minimum wage, because these people are working under a Federal minimum wage that was imposed in 1997. And until the Republican leadership decides to go forward, these people will not get that increase in the wages that they so desperately need.

Now, there is a glimmer of hope, because today 64 Republicans made the decision to support the motion to instruct. I assume they understood that this motion to instruct will not become law. I hope they didn't vote for it because it won't become law; I hope that it wasn't about posturing. I talked to many of them before the vote and after the vote, and they told me that they wanted to speak and vote on the minimum wage and to send a message. And they did that today. Hopefully that message will start to be received by the Republican leadership in the House of Representatives and they will schedule a minimum-wage bill for an up or down vote on this House floor, and we will get to speak our wills and hopefully we will reflect what the American people want us to do, and that is to give these people an increase in the minimum wage.

So I would hope that this vote that was taken today will be the beginning of the Republican leadership walking toward that decision to provide for an increase in the minimum wage. I would hope that they would do that because it is the right thing to do. I would hope that they would do that without tricking up the bill, without making the bill

so that it can pass the House but it can't get passed in the Senate or it won't get done in conference. I hope they will do it soon enough so that it can become the law of the land.

We all understand the political games that can be played, but these political games are tragically almost lethal to these families. These people go to work every day for a whole year and they end up with \$10,700, and out of that \$10,700 not only are they substantially below the official poverty line, so you are making a decision that the official minimum wage in this country will keep these individuals locked in poverty.

That is not the only part of it. It means that those people, those people will have more difficulty in providing the necessities for their families, for their children, because many of these minimum wage workers have children who rely on that wage as a means of holding the household together. So as rents have continued to go up and energy has continued to go up and telecommunications has gone up, all of these things have gone up, these people struggle with this every day.

I dare say most of us in Congress, we work an 8-hour day or 10-hour day or 12-hour day, but when we go home we are done. These people have a second job. They have to figure out how to economically hold their household together, how to provide for their children, how to provide food and rent and health care and all of these things together on \$10,700 a year. That is difficult. That is tough.

I hope that today's vote with 64 Republicans sending a message to their leadership that they want to speak out, they want to vote on the minimum wage, that the Republican leadership will respond in kind and give the House of Representatives the vote that the American people desire.

□ 1700

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

RAIL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Ms. CARSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, we face a grave and growing threat. The safety of America's rails and subways is on shaky ground almost five years after September 11th. We need to take a hard, honest look at the issue of rail security and give America's rail passengers the same level of confidence that airline passengers get everyday.

In recent years, we have experienced an annual average of 30 terrorist attacks on passenger rail across the world. The past three